

Wolfe as Cyby

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 05 Nov 1999

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Robert Borski — 05 Nov 1999, 17:16

<And someone (I forget who) on here has pointed out that Cyby is described as roughly what Wolfe might have looked at when he wrote BOTNS, so we have Wolfe as the humble apprentice to the master of the archives.>

Meant to cover this the first time it came up.

Wolfe as Cyby is an interesting notion, with a fair amount of resonance given the Borges-Ultan connection.

But I don't think it's right.

Rather, I think Wolfe first makes his cameo in SHADOW, then reprises it in CITADEL. But only in the latter does Severian provide the essential physical description:

"I never really looked at him on that afternoon when he had carried in a tray for Dorcas, Agia, and me. I did so now. He was a balding man about as tall as Drotte, thin and somehow pinched; his eyes were deep blue, and there was a delicacy to the molding of his eyes and mouth I recognized at once." (303)

The mystery figure here, of course, is Ouen, Severian's father. Other than the thinness, I believe it still describes how GW looks.

Moreover, as I've pointed out before (and as alga subsequently documented), the name Ouen is the Welsh form of Eugene.

Ouen as Gene Wolfe--the father of Severian. But then we've always known that, haven't we?

Robert Borski

Jim Henley — 05 Nov 1999, 22:30 · follows Robert Borski

-----Original Message-----

From: urth-errors at lists.best.com [mailto:urth-errors at lists.best.com]On
Behalf Of Robert Borski

The mystery figure here, of course, is Ouen, Severian's father.
Other than the thinness, I believe it still describes how GW looks.

That's sort of saying "other than the blood" when comparing something to the Battle of Antietam . . .

<gdr>

Jim

"It ain't the knife thru your heart that tears you apart
it's just the thought of someone sticking it in"
-- Graham Parker, "Protection"